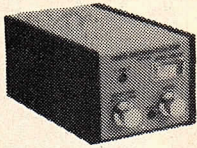


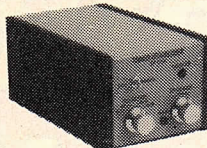
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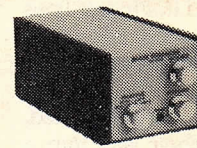


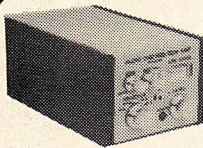
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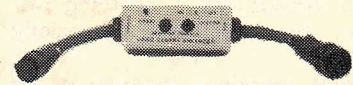
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VV-577P

AUDIO SWITCHER

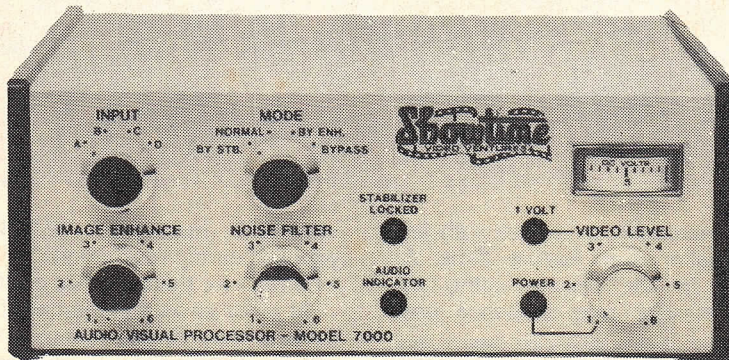
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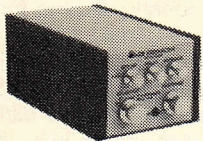


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If you've seen the films *Being There* or *The Cannonball Run* you'll have been party to the clowning and fluffing of lines which occurred during filming, and which the producers used as background to the end credits.

Such "out-takes", as they're called, would not usually find their way into a finished film — they'd join other material which, for one reason or another, ends up on the cutting-room floor. Over the years some of this discarded material has become legendary, and numerous stories have been told about its fate.

Most film-makers only use about one-fifth of the footage they shoot. The ratio of film shot to footage actually used is called the "shooting ratio" and is usually expressed 5:1. Using this ideal ratio, it is interesting to compare the wasted footage on various films — anything over 15:1 can be considered especially extravagant.

The most notorious instance of an excessive shooting ratio is Howard Hughes' *Hell's Angels* (1930), which had a shooting ratio of 249:1 and produced enough exposed footage to run non-stop for 23 days. The actual running time of the released print was a mere two hours, 15 minutes. In one scene — a close-up of an aeroplane engine — Hughes' exposed footage equivalent to four full-length features!

Some other extravagant ratios are Chaplin's *City Lights* (1931) with 125:1; William Wyler's *Ben Hur* (1959) with 47:1; Erich von Stroheim's *Foolish Wives* (1921) with 36:1; Victor Fleming's *Gone With The Wind* (1939) with 23:1; and Ken Annakin's *The Longest Day* (1972) with a ratio of 21:1.

Sometimes there's a good reason for a high shooting ratio — especially if the film contains expensive scenes which it is important to capture in one take. The most edited sequence of any movie was the chariot race in the 1925 version of *Ben Hur*: in a single day's shooting 42

cameras were used to expose sufficient film to make seven feature films. As presented in the release print, the complete chariot race sequence used

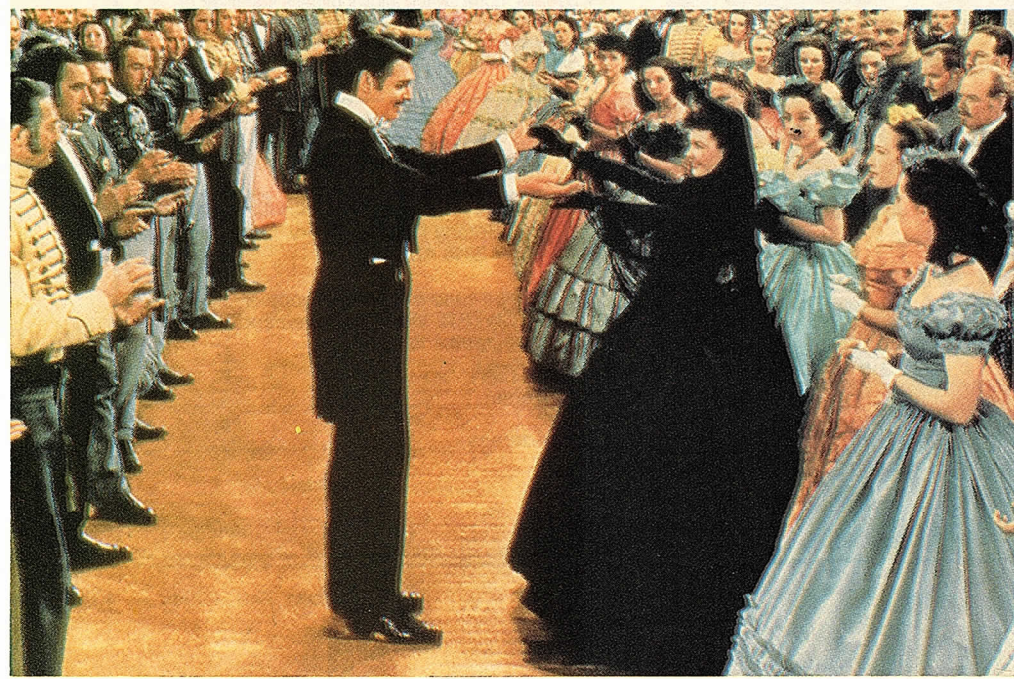
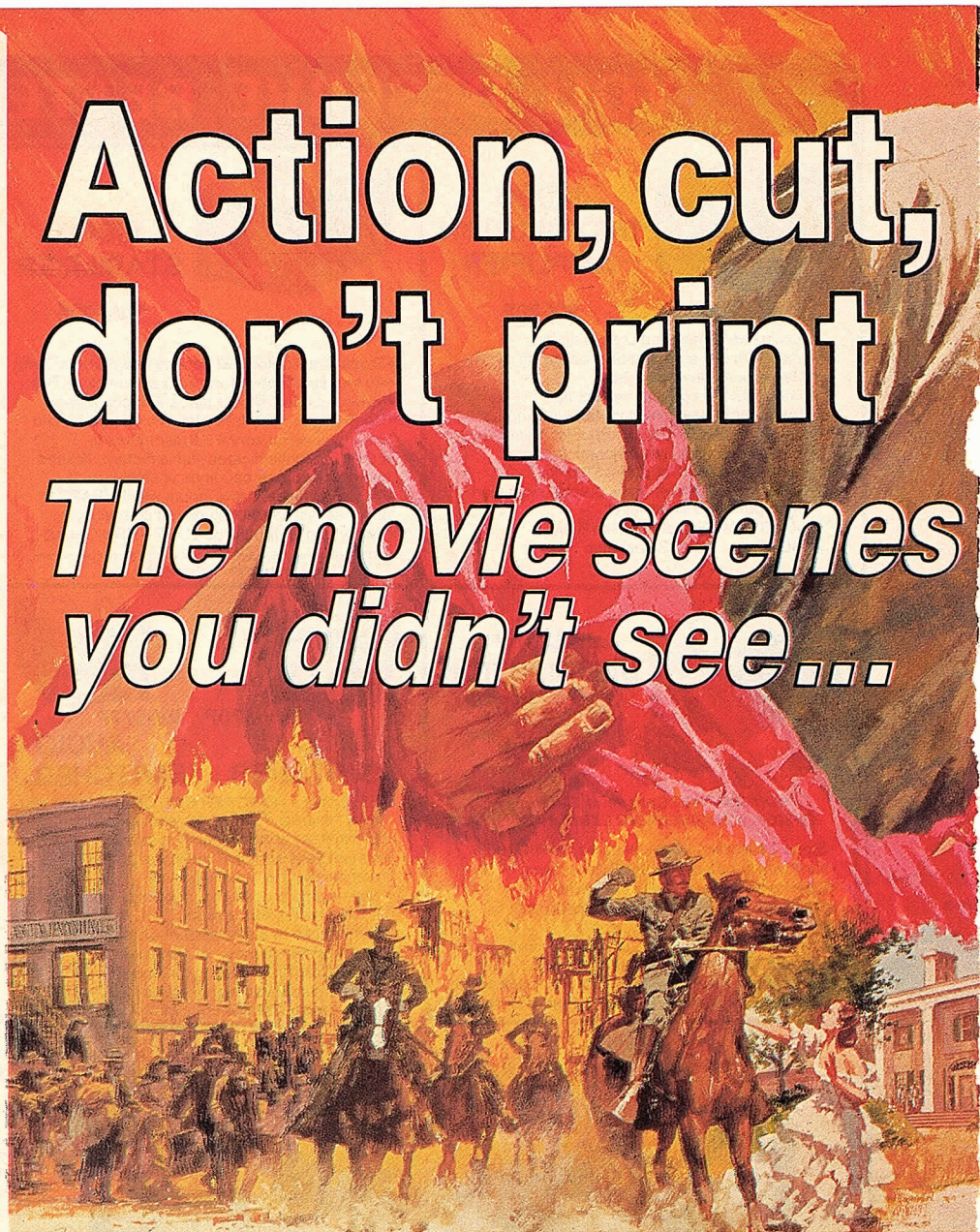
only 230 metres of 72,933 metres exposed during four months of shooting — a ratio for the sequence of 267:1.

At other times the amount of exposed footage may simply reflect a director's artistic indulgence — or arrogance. Joseph von Sternberg, for example, gained a reputation for an exactitude bordering on the lunatic. During filming of *The Scarlet Empress* (1934), his fastidiousness led to a gigantic dinner party scene dragging on for so long that a boar's head centrepiece on the banquet table began to putrefy in the heat. Actor Sam Jaffe once recalled how von Sternberg made Louise Dresser blow out the same set of candle so many times that she walked off the set and steadfastly refused to do the scene again.

In big budget films like "*Gone With The Wind*" (left) and "*Bridge Over The River Kwai*" (right) they often shoot over twenty times the amount of film that appears on the screen.

Action, cut, don't print

The movie scenes you didn't see...





By Brian Jeffrey

Actor Cesar Romero, who worked for von Sternberg in *The Devil is a Woman* (1935), described him as "a little Napoleon" and recalled how he (Romero)

was repeatedly directed to run down a flight of stairs in high-heeled boots, until eventually he tripped and fell flat on his face — whereupon von Sternberg

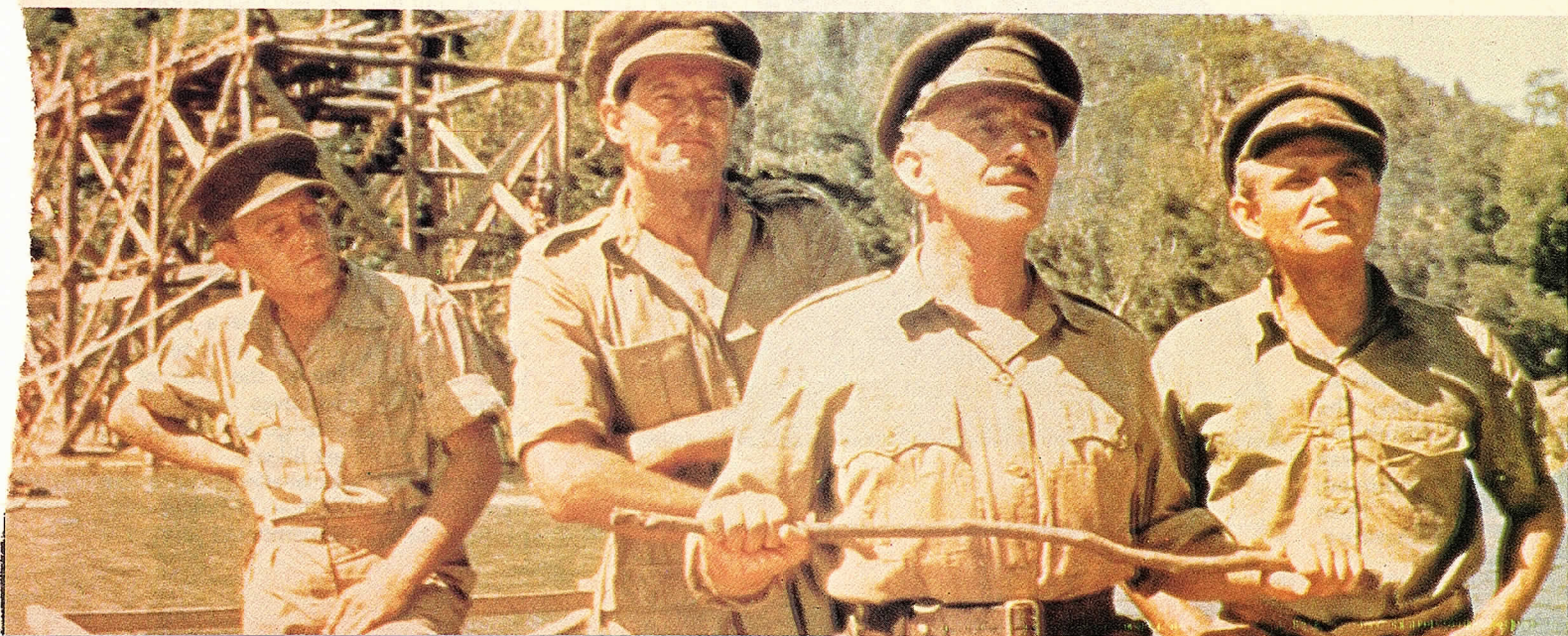
decided to use the second take anyway!

Actors fluffing their lines can also cause scenes to be shot again and again. Rex Harrison, who played Julius Caesar in *Cleopatra* (1963), had trouble during the filming of his speech on the gigantic forum set. Six thousand extras — along with hundreds of horses and various other animals — were on hand for a scene in which Cleopatra's procession entered Rome. Two signal rocket were fired — one to indicate the cameras were rolling, and the other to signal Harrison to begin his speech as the procession advanced. Time after time, however, he fluffed his lines and the thousands of extras and animals had to be returned to their starting point. It was not until the second day of filming that he finally got his lines right.

Sometimes it's not the actor's fault that footage can't be used. During filming of *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1967) an oversight by a cameraman resulted in a costly waste of time. At the story's close, the bridge is blown as a train rumbles across it. Producer Sam Spiegel had arranged for six unattended cameras to cover the scene. Their operators were to set them running and retreat to safety. As each man arrived at his prearranged safety point he was required to press a button to signal he was clear. The explosives would not be detonated until all six men had indicated they were out of the danger zone.

Unfortunately, one cameraman forgot to press his button. Spiegel — understandably reluctant to give the go-ahead for the bridge to be destroyed with the whereabouts of one of his cameramen still unknown — watched helplessly as the train, which had been set in motion further up the track, crossed the bridge and ran straight into the jungle. The film company had to work for many long hours to make good the damage and set up the scene again.

Continued on page 46



The movie scenes you didn't see...

Continued from page 45

If the footage trimmed from a film can be used in another film it may end up in a studio's library of stock footage. When Zoltan Korda shot the 1939 version of *The Four Feathers* on location in the Sudan, he returned home with so much footage that he was able to supply scenes for many other films for decades to come — including *Storm Over The Nile* (1955), *Master of the World* (1961) and *East of Sudan* (1964).

Occasionally, footage will be deleted prior to a film's release because the studio — or the censor — thinks public attitudes or sensitivities will be adversely affected. A case in point is the famous sequence cut from *Frankenstein* (1931) in which the monster, played by Boris Karloff, meets a small girl on the shores of a lake. She is the only person to treat him like a normal being and he joins her as she throws flowers on the water to watch them float. When the flowers are gone he throws the child in, innocently thinking she will float too. The last part of this scene was deleted from the release prints of the film. In the cinema version we are shown the monster contemplating his empty hands after he has throw away all the flowers, followed by a quick cut to the girl's father carrying her body through the village streets.

On other occasions footage is deleted because the first version of a film is considered too long. Sometimes such cuts sit awkwardly in the release version and can be confusing. An example is the Australian film *Sunday Too Far Away* (1975). The storyline of this film originally had three main characters — a young

boy, Michael (played by Gregory Apps), Foley (Jack Thompson) and Old Garth (Reg Lye), each of whom represented a generation of shearers. It was later decided to shorten the film and make Foley the central character, but in achieving this the relationship of some scenes to others was lost. More importantly, a whole sub-plot was removed. The scene in which Foley breaks down and cries in the presence of the Cocky's daughter seems unrelated to the rest of the film because it belongs to the excised sub-plot.

If a film achieves popular and critical acclaim, out-takes are likely to attract the interest of movie buffs. In 1983 a restored version of the 1954 film *A Star is Born* was screened to excited audiences in major US cities. Shortly after the film's first release Warner Brothers had cut 30 minutes from it, including three complete musical numbers. Although many people thought the footage was lost forever, others began searching the studio's film vaults and eventually found bits and pieces of the excised footage. A sad note to the successful project was that George Cukor — who directed the film and was so upset by the studio's cuts that he refused to look at the shortened version — died on the eve of the restored copy's first public screening.

No doubt there's a lot of other footage lying discarded somewhere, just waiting to be slotted back into videos — including a big production number from *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). As Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Cowardly Lion and the Tin Woodsman enter the haunted forest on their way to the witch's castle, the Witch



and her winged monkey are seen gazing at the four principals in a crystal ball. The Witch sends a flotilla of winged monkeys to bring back Dorothy and her dog, Toto, stating that in the meantime she will send "a little insect" ahead to take the fight out of them." The next shot, however, shows the winged monkeys making their attack. In the original version of the film, the reference to the "little insect" led into a "jitterbug" number in which furry pink and blue creatures cause Dorothy and her companions to get the "jitters" and dance until they are too tired to fight off the winged monkeys.

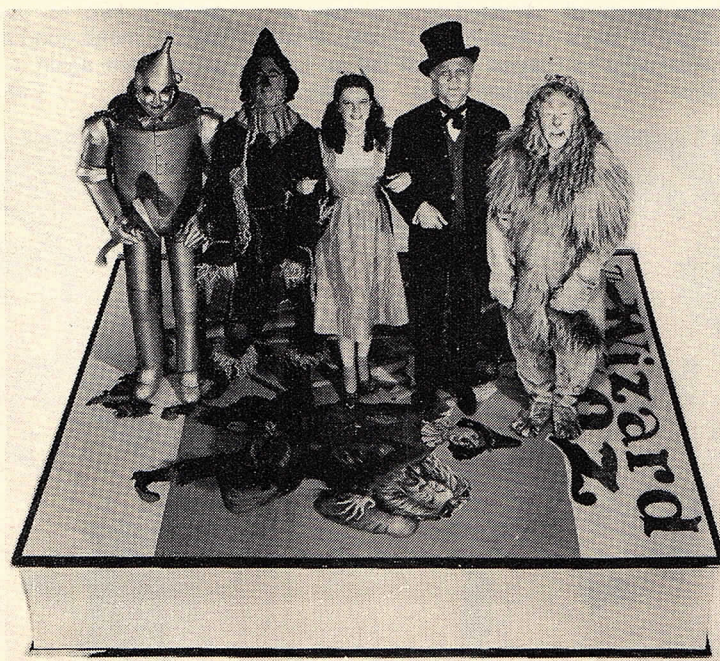
One story has it that Bert Lahr (the Cowardly Lion) overshadowed everyone else so much in the jitterbug sequence that it had to be deleted for Judy Garland's benefit.

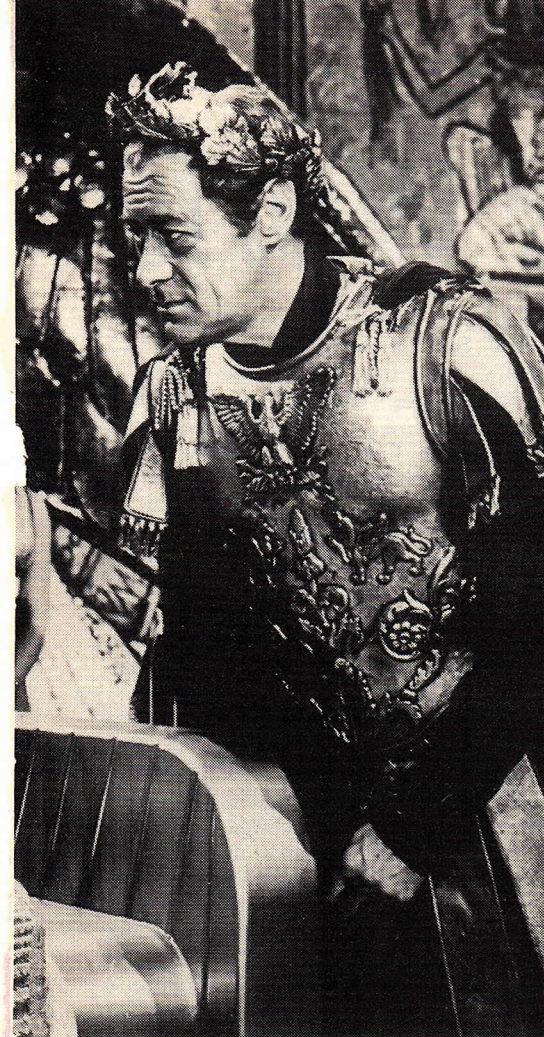
Another musical number cut from *The Wizard of Oz* was the "renovation sequence", in which the residents of Emerald City celebrate Dorothy's return to the Wizard.

Some viewers may sense a curiously "flat" ending to the film as a result of these deletions, but at the time of its release MGM executives judged that some footage had to go for fear young audiences would get fidgety.

Some gory special-effects were cut from *Spartacus* (1960) — including shots of men being dismembered during a

Two major sequences were cut from "The Wizard Of Oz" before release, and at one time the song "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" was removed, then reinstated.





Spectaculars like "Cleopatra" (left) and "Ben Hur" (right) have a habit of running away with film ratios.

battle between Roman troops and Spartacus' slave army. The second unit director on the film, Yakima Canutt, recalls in his biography *Stunt Man* how in one scene a man's head was cut off in front of the audience's eyes.

"I took the smallest stunt man I could find," he says, "and had the effects crew build pads to bring false shoulders about the level of his head. We cut holes in his clothing so he could see, and effects gave him the blood tubes. We had other

combatants work around him to cover the most gruesome part of the effect.

"When everything was set we started the scene. Right in front of the camera, off went his head. Immediately another fighter went between the camera and the head being severed. It did look gruesome!"

Canutt says he sat through the film following its release, but can't recall seeing that particular effect — that's because the Legion of Decency had brought pressure to bear on the studio and the offending scenes were dropped. Another 22 minutes were lost when the film was re-issued in 1967, including a scene in which Jean Simmons watches the crucified Kirk Douglas dying in agony.

Legend has it that an assistant editor who worked on *Gone With The Wind* (1939) was so upset by cuts made by

producer David O. Selznick that he preserved all the discarded material — and that it exists to this day. Actually, while the shooting ratio of 23:1 may suggest that an enormous amount of the story ended up on the cutting room floor, much of the excess footage was due to Selznick's habit of having his directors film a scene from a number of angles. His reason for this was to provide a selection of material to choose from in assembling the finished product. However, one researcher, Roland Flamini, says that some scenes were, in fact, excluded — including a Battle of Gettysburg sequence directed by William Cameron Menzies (one of four directors who worked on the film) in which Rhett Butler presents Bonnie Blue with a tea set he had brought from London, and another of Scarlett finding some of her friends among the wounded in the famous scene at the railroad yard. Where that footage is today — if it still exists — is anybody's guess.

Finally, watch for some footage you *should* have missed if the editor or director had been on their toes:

- A newspaper in the World War II drama *Triple Cross* (1966) which carried a headline about the cost of the supersonic airliner Concorde.
- The derelict body of a modern automobile alongside the railroad line in the turn-of-the-century musical *Hello Dolly!* (1969).
- Yul Brynner wearing an earring in some shots but not in others while singing his *A Puzzlement* number in *The King And I* (1956).
- The orange box clearly marked "Product of Israel" in *The Sound of Music* (1965), which is set in the 1930s.

"The Longest Day" was shot on a film ratio of 21 feet used for every foot on the screen.



Dot takes on the world

In an industry as fickle and ethereal as animated-film production, Yoram Gross is something of a legend — his all-Australian feature-length movies sell better than most conventional Australian films, and have carved a permanent niche for themselves overseas.

by Ian Beck

When Yoram Gross and his wife, Sandra, arrived from Israel 16 years ago, the art of animation in Australia was restricted to advertising "shorts" and government-sponsored educational films on topics like road safety and child care.

The film industry revival was still 10 years away, but the couple found enough advertising work to keep their company — Yoram Gross Film Studio — financially buoyant in a highly competitive market. Their long-term aim was always the production of full-length animated films.

"Government funding was the key to the movie industry's revival in this country," Sandra Gross says "Until that came along it wasn't possible to produce feature-length animated films."

When funding became available the couple settled on a uniquely Australian book as the vehicle for their first production. *Dot And The Kangaroo* was written by Ethel Pedley in the 1890s, and quickly became an Australian children's classic. It tells the story of a small child lost in the outback, and features likeable and distinctly Australian characters in settings likely to appeal to overseas audiences.

Continued on page 50

Above: Dot meets a snake in "Dot and the Kangaroo".



"Around the World with Dot" has just been released on cassette.